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The Most Noted Jewish Book in the World

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What a book! vast and wide as the world, rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven—the whole drama of humanity is in this book! —HEINE

The Most Noted Jewish Book in the World

BY

HENRY EINSPRUCH

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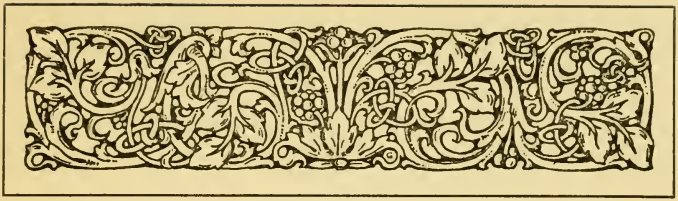

The Most Noted Jewish Book

One thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars, or approximately two hundred and eighteen dollars a page, such was the record price paid by the Phœnix Book Shop for a mutilated fragment of a book at the American Art Galleries, New York, on March 5, 1926.

Not H. G. Wells, Albert Einstein, Mark Twain, Rudyard Kipling, Anatole France, nor any other modern or popular writer has ever received royalties on his books anywhere near approaching the price paid for these few pages. One might suppose at first glance that it was possibly an early edition of Shakespeare, like the one for which Dr. A. S. Rosenbach, the Philadelphia antiquarian, paid fifty thousand dollars, or some such other rare book.

Nor was it the writings of Homer, Virgil, Socrates, Cæsar, or Marcus Aurelius. Nor those revered by millions of devotees: the Vedas of India, or its Upanishads, the Zend-Avesta of the Persians, or the Koran of Mohammed, the writings of Confucius or Lao-tse, nor, to rise higher, the Talmud of the Rabbis. But, strange, it was paid for

part of a book of which Voltaire as far back as the middle of the 18th Century predicted that in one hundred years no one would read or care for.

What, it may be asked, was this book of which but a fragment could command such a fabulous price?

It was a Jewish book—the book of the New Testament, and the priceless pages were a fragment from the writings of a pupil of Rabbi Gamaliel who lived during the second Temple, one Saul of Tarsus. And of what importance can his words be to any one in this twentieth century that they should command such extraordinary interest?

Our civilization is the product of certain specific causes and influences. No student of history can deny the fact that the European and American peoples are on a higher level of culture than, say, those of India or China. Yet the civilizations of both India and China antedate those of Europe and America. In the case of India, we are told by anthropologists, that their racial stock is of a purer Aryan type than that of the European. Why, then, has India never given us the great symphonies and musical harmonies of Beethoven and Bach, the oratorios of Mendelssohn and Handel; the Shakespeares, Miltons and Dantes of poetry and literature? Why are artists and sculptors, pioneers in reform and world movements in China or India conspicuous by their absence? Why are they present in Europe and America, so numerous in all Western civilization?

"We Jews do not mind saying," to quote the words of Claude G. Montefiore, a Jewish savant, "that the greatest

influence upon European and American history and civilization has been the Bible. But we too often forget that the Bible which has had this influence is not merely the Old Testament. It is the Old Testament and the New Testament combined. And of the two, it is the New Testament which has undoubtedly had the greater influence and has been of the greater importance."[1]

What is this book, this New Testament of which he speaks? Its Hebrew name is הברית החדשה (Heb'rith Hechedasha) or the New Covenant. It is a collection of twenty-seven writings, biographic, historic, prophetic, and a number of personal letters. Its authors, with but one exception, were Jews; the Hero around whom the whole book centers, was a "Jew of Jews." Yet, notwithstanding this racial background, it has been regarded of such value as to warrant its translation into some 900 different languages and dialects, a thing that cannot be said of any other book. No living being has the remotest idea how many copies or portions of this book have been printed, but today its circulation easily reaches the billion mark. Last year alone some twenty million copies were printed in England and America. As over against the millions of books issued today it ranks supreme as the world's "best seller." And, to quote again Claude G. Montefiore: "If it is an improper ignorance not to have read some portions of Shakespeare or Milton, it is, I am inclined to think, a much more improper ignorance not to have read the Gospels" (the first four portions of the book).[2]

[1]The Synoptic Gospels, p. 101.
[2]Ibid.

The Hero of the Book

Civilization has just entered the second quarter of the twentieth century. Every newspaper, magazine, legal document, business transaction, all correspondence and enactments of legislatures, to be intelligible and valid, must be dated accordingly. But the amazing thing is that so few pause to ask an explanation as to why we call this the twentieth century. Surely the world is much older than twenty centuries, or than twenty times twenty centuries! From the founding of Rome nearly twenty-seven centuries have glided by, and more than twenty-four centuries have come and gone since Aristotle crossed the portals of the Academy at Athens to be instructed by the immortal Plato. Yet we say the *twentieth* century. What event marked the dawn of this new era? Was it the birth of Cæsar? Of Moses? Of Buddha? Of Mohammed? Nay, it was a son of our race, the Hero of this Book, whose coming so turned the stream of the centuries out of its channel that, each recurring first day of January, the world that regards itself as civilized tacitly attests the fact that with His advent a new era of its history began. To regard Him a myth, as some would have us, would be more futile than to deny the existence of Alexander the Great or Judas Maccabeus. And yet the Hero of the New Testament is no Alexander or Judas Maccabeus. The force that He injected into the world was not military, it was not political, it was the force of a life and of a life's teaching. This it is that has caused a book, written twenty centuries ago by a few Jewish men, to wield to the present day such tremen-

dous influence; this it is which has made it the beacon for the learned and the uplifter of the savage. It was this life, the purest of the mighty, and the mightiest of the pure, of which Thomas Carlyle wrote: "It is our divinest symbol. Higher has the human thought not yet reached: a symbol of quite perennial, infinite character, whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into and anew made manifest."[1]

Surely our hearts should leap with pride that He who was blood of our blood and flesh of our flesh, should have become the "Light to lighten the Gentiles."[2] Even those who do not follow Him attest that no other single Personality in history has succeeded in rallying around Himself more than 560,000,000 followers and in making architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry and music agencies through which to lift the human race to a higher level and up to Himself.

The Gospels—"Jewish Literature"

Dr. Max Nordau, the outstanding Zionist thinker next to Herzl, writing to the American publisher, Isaac Funk, declares: "We claim the Gospels flowers of Jewish literature."[3] Since, to quote Dr. Nordau, the Gospels are Jewish literature, the question involuntarily arises, Why has this Jewish literature found readers and admirers amongst all sorts of people and nations, amongst Japanese, English-

[1]Sartor Resartus, book iii. chap. 3.
[2]Isaiah, chap. xlii. 6; Luke, chap. ii. 32.
[3]See George Crowley's *Tarry Thou Till I Come*, p. 559.

men, Germans, Frenchmen, Chinese, Americans, Italians —practically the whole civilized and semi-civilized world? There must have been something of intrinsic and universal value in this Jewish book to prompt a genius like Tolstoy to base his philosophy of life upon it, and to cause most of the constructive social movements of the present day to take the Golden Rule,[1] one of the basic teachings of the Book, as the keynote of their pronouncements. It may be seriously questioned whether the existence of the Red Cross, that great Sister of Mercy in the crises of war, pestilence, hunger, earthquake, flood and fire could be conceived of apart from the classic story of the Good Samaritan, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke.[2]

And why, in the light of this, it may be asked, did the ancient Synagogue condemn these writings, threatening those who read them with the "loss of a share in the world to come?"[3] Surely it was not because of a familiarity with them; rather, their prohibition grew out of fear that a knowledge of this teaching on the part of the masses would undermine such puerile quibblings as to "whether an egg laid on a festival may be eaten."[4] Any other motive would hardly seem tenable, it was plainly a case of allowing the monster, Prejudice, to get in the way and thus deprive us, the rightful possessors, of what was legitimately our own.

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[1]The Gospel of Matthew, chap. vii. 14.

[2]The Gospel of Luke, chap. x. 25-37.

[3]Sanhedrin, 90*a*.

[4]Talmud Babli, Beca, 1*a*.

The Teaching of the Book

The entire New Testament is not a very large book. There are tractates in the Talmud which are much larger than all the writings of the New Testament combined. But we know of no book so compact, yet containing such wealth of thought, so capable of stirring the heartstrings of the race as is this book of less than 400 pages. Nowhere in the whole range of the world's literature can we find anything approaching it in beauty and strength. Though uttered by Jews, it is not for this or that group of people, but for universal man. Even a cursory reading of any of its twenty-seven writings will bear conclusive evidence of the truth of this assertion. Whole libraries have been written on the teaching of Jesus; in this brief compass we can call attention to but a few of the matchless religio-ethical principles taken at random from its pages. Tolstoy, the great Russian mystic, has summarized them under what he calls the five great commandments.

"The first commandment—

To offend no one, and by no act to excite evil in others, for out of evil comes evil.

The second commandment—

To be in all things chaste, and not to quit the wife whom we have taken; for the abandoning of wives and the changing of them is the cause of all loose living in the world.

The third commandment—

Never to take an oath, because we can promise nothing, for man is altogether in the hands of the Father, and oaths are imposed for wicked ends.

The fourth commandment—

Not to resist evil, to bear with offences, and to do yet more than is demanded of us; neither to judge, nor to go to law, for every man is himself full of faults, and cannot teach. By seeking revenge men only teach others to do the same.

The fifth commandment—

To make no distinction between our own countrymen and foreigners, for all men are the children of one Father."[1]

Turning to the teaching proper, we find there the most striking and fundamental rules for the government of our relation to God and to man. In clear and positive declarations Jesus enunciates His principles as follows:

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew v. 7.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God. Matthew v. 9.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. Matthew vii. 1.

Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Matthew v. 42.

[1]The Essence of the Gospel, p. 177.

Every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. Matthew v. 22.

Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Matthew v. 14.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matthew v. 8.

Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. Matthew v. 34-36.

Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you. Luke vi. 27.

When thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Matthew vi. 2, 3.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. Matthew vi. 19-21.

God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. John iv. 24.

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matthew vi. 24.

Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? Matthew vi. 25, 26.

Be not anxious for tomorrow: for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Matthew vi. 34.

Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Matthew vii. 3.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets. Matthew vii. 12.

Give, and it shall be given unto you, for with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. Luke vi: 38.

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Mark ii. 27.

All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Matthew xxvi. 52.

Foolish vows do not bind a man nor unwashen hands defile him; the things that defile a man are evil thoughts and deeds, murder, theft, violence, adultery, false witness, blasphemy. (*Condensation of Matthew* xv. 1-20.)

They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. Matthew ix. 12.

Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Matthew x. 28.

What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Mark viii. 36, 37.

If thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. Luke xvii. 3, 4.

He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted. Matthew xxiii. 11, 12.

This selection is by no means exhaustive. We have but touched the periphery of the body-content of the book, a minute analysis of which would require volumes.

The Gospels and the Rabbinic Literature

No Jewish scholar of any prominence today fails to recognize that the teaching of Jesus forms one of the most unique religio-ethical codes in the world. Dr. Joseph Klausner, Professor in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in his epoch-making book, *Jesus of Nazareth, His Times, His Life and His Teaching*, affirms, "In the ethical code of Jesus there is a sublimity, distinctiveness and orginality, in form unparalleled in any other Hebrew ethical code."[1] But independent as Klausner is of Jewish tradition by admitting "distinctiveness and originality" in the teaching of Jesus, he has not fully succeeded in liberating himself from the general Jewish contention that this teaching has its basis in the Rabbinic literature. It cannot be denied that there exists a striking similarity between some of the teachings of Jesus and the sayings of certain Rabbis. But what basis is there for the view that it was Jesus and not the Rabbis who indulged in plagiarism? When the Talmud, for example, in Sanhedrin 100*a*, attributes to Rabbi Meir the saying:

"With what measure a man metes it shall be measured to him in heaven"

—a saying identical in spirit as well as in phraseology with that uttered by Jesus in Matthew vii. 2:

"With what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you,"

[1] ישו הנוצרי, זמנו חייו ותורתו p. 448.

Dr. Klausner, like Graetz and Geiger before him, elects to make of this a case for the Rabbis. In the interest of historic accuracy, however, it must be noted that Rabbi Meir was not yet born at the time Jesus gave wing to the above maxim.

Dr. Klausner, it is evident, despite his claim to objectivity in the presentation of facts, was hampered by his intense nationalism and by the apparent prejudices which mar so many of the pages of his otherwise most interesting book. But while Dr. Klausner failed to reach the heights of objectivity, Claude G. Montefiore, the Jewish savant, succeeded to a much greater degree in his commentary on the *Synoptic Gospels*, in which he discusses the problem of the relation of the Gospels to the Rabbinic Literature with the candor of a free spirit. To the question, Upon which side lies originality? he avers: "When Talmud and Gospels are compared, the originality is almost always on the side of the Gospels."[1] And to those who are forever looking for parallels between Gospel and Talmud he pertinently rejoins: "A great book is more than its own sentences taken singly or disjointedly. A great personality is more than the record of its teaching, and the teaching is more than the bits of it taken one by one. It must be viewed as a whole. It must be judged as a whole. It has a spirit, an aroma, which evaporates when its elements or fragments are looked at separately. This piecemeal way of looking at a book, a teaching, a person, is perhaps partially one of the evil results of Jewish legalism.

[1]The Synoptic Gospels, Vol. 1, p. 103.

"There is a certain spirit and glow about the teaching of Jesus which you either appreciate or fail to appreciate. You cannot recognize or do justice to it by saying: 'The teaching of Jesus comprises the following maxims and injunctions. Of these some are borrowed from the Old Testament, some are paralleled by the Talmud, and a few are impracticable.' The teaching of Jesus, which has had such gigantic effects upon the world, is more, and other than a dissected list of injunctions. It is not merely the sum of its parts; it is a whole, a spirit.

"That spirit has characteristics of genius. It is great, stimulating, heroic; it may not always be 'practical' but it is always, or nearly always, big and grand. Even if you find separate or close parallels for 970 out of say, 1000 verses in the Gospel in which Jesus is the speaker, and even if you put them together and made a nice little book of them, you would not have produced a substitute of equal religious value. The unity, the aroma, the spirit, the genius, would all have fled. Or, rather, you could not infuse *them* into your elegant collection of fragments and tit-bits. '*Morceaux choisis* remain just *Morceaux choisis.*'"[1]

That the contention of Claude G. Montefiore that "When Talmud and Gospels are compared, the originality is almost always on the side of the Gospels" is not a mere statement, but can be supported by evidence, may easily be adduced from the following parallels:

[1]The Synoptic Gospels, p. 104.

GOSPEL	TALMUD
Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. —*Matthew* v. 7.	He who is merciful toward his fellow creatures shall receive mercy from heaven above. —*Rabbi Gamaliel Beribbi, 3rd Century A. D.–Shabbath, 151b.*
Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay. —*Matthew* v. 37.	Let your yea be yea, and your nay be nay. —*Rabbi Abbaye, died 338 A. D. –Baba Mezia, 49a.*
Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? —*Matthew* vi. 26.	Hast thou ever seen a beast or a bird that followed a trade, and yet they are fed without toil. But these were only created to minister to my Maker. Was it not right, then, that I should be supported without toil? —*Rabbi Simeon ben Eleazer, 3rd Century A. D.–Kidushin, 82b.*
Every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. —*Matthew* v. 29.	Whosoever lifts up his hand against his neighbor, though he do not strike him, is called an offender and sinner. —*Rabbi Resh Lakesh, A. D. 212-280. –Sanhedrin, 93a.*
Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? —*Matthew* vii. 3.	Do they say, take the splinter out of thine eye, he will answer: "Remove the beam out of thine own eye." —*Rabbi Jochanan, surnamed Bar Napha, A. D. 199-279–Baba Bathra, 15b.*

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

—*Matthew* v. 10.

Be rather of the persecuted than of the persecutors.

—*Rabbi Abahu, A. D.* 279-310. –*Baba Kamma,* 93*a.*

If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

—*Matthew* vi. 14.

Whosoever forgives the wrong done unto him, God will also forgive his sins.

—*Rabba, died* 331 *A. D.*–*Massecheth Derech erez sutta,* viii: 4.

Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink?

—*Matthew* vi. 31.

He who still has bread in the basket, and saith, What shall I eat tomorrow? belongeth to those of little faith.

—*Rabbi Eliezer, died A. D.* 177. –*Sotah,* 48*b.*

The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

—*Matthew* ix. 37.

The day is short and the task is great, and the workmen are sluggish, and the reward is great, and the Master of the house is urgent.

—*Rabbi Tarphon, A. D.* 120.–*Aboth* ii. 15.

Freely ye received, freely give.

—*Matthew* x. 8.

As I have taught you freely, so teach you freely.

—*Samuel, died* 257 *A. D.* –*Nedarim,* 47*a.*

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.

—*Matthew* xxiii. 12.

Whosoever makes himself little in this world for the sake of the word of the law will be made great in the world to come, and whosoever makes himself a slave in this world for the sake of the word of the law will be made free in the world to come.

—*Rabbi Jeremiah, died* 250 *A. D.* –*Baba Meziah,* 85*b.*

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

Mark ii. 27.

It is written, Ye shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy unto you (Exodus 31. 14). It is handed over to you, not ye are handed over to the Sabbath.

—*Rabbi Jonathan ben Joseph, (flourished after the destruction of the Temple.)–Yoma,* 85*a*.

Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

—*Matthew* vii. 24-27.

A man who studies the law, and acts in accordance with its commandments, is likened unto a man who builds a house the foundation of which is made of freestone and the superstructure of bricks. Storms and floods cannot injure the house. But he who studies the law but is destitute of good actions, is like unto a man who builds the foundation of his house of brick and mortar, and raises the upper stories with solid stone. The flood will soon undermine and overturn the house.

—*Elisha ben Abuyah, A. D.* 138. *–Aboth de Rabba Nathan, chap.* 24.

In citing these parallels it was not our object to exhaust the material. Professor Herman L. Strack, in his monumental commentary on the New Testament in the light of the Talmud and Midrash[1] has brought together several hundred such parallels, showing conclusively that in almost every instance where parallels do exist, the authors to

[1]Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch.

whom the Talmud attributes these sayings lived at least one, and in several instances even three hundred years later than did Jesus. To attribute then, the teaching of Jesus to the Talmudic literature is to betray an ignorance of sources and historic data.

How then, may we account for the existence of parallels between the Gospels and the Talmud? Matthew, the biographer of Jesus, relates that wherever Jesus went the masses heard Him gladly, and that His fame spread rapidly throughout the Judean land. There are a number of references in the Talmud proper telling of discussions between Jewish Christians and leading Rabbis.[1] Would not all this indicate that the words of Jesus had become common property, passing from lip to lip, thus entering the Talmud and there sailing under false colors?

The Ideal of Jesus

The teaching of Jesus is His Magna Charta, His supreme ideal for the race. The Western peoples, the most virile nations of the world, espoused this teaching because of its challenge to a higher and nobler life. In a comparatively brief period of time Christianity had conquered the world. Roman emperors, Greek philosophers, sturdy barbarians—all were drawn to the Teacher of Nazareth, and for now nearly twenty centuries the world has been nominally under His sway and has regarded itself as Christian. But Christianity is more than a mere name,

[1]Aboda Zara, 16*b*, 17*a*, 27*b*. Jerusalem Shabbath, 14*d*.

it implies an ethic as well as a belief. This has not always been properly evaluated even by those who regard themselves as Christians.

Jesus made faith in Himself and in His teaching a cardinal requisite, but placed equal emphasis on personal conduct. To use a well-known saying of His: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."[1] In harmony with the spirit of this saying, James, an early disciple of Jesus, declares: "Faith without works is dead."[2] A man's faith, therefore, is to be judged by his deeds.

It cannot be claimed that nominal Christianity has ever reflected the spirit of Jesus or that of His teaching. The pogromist, the instigator of racial antagonisms and of war, to cover his shameful and brutal act, may appropriate to himself the name Christian, but his deeds are in direct antithesis to the ideal of Jesus. The failure of those who call themselves by His name to act in conformity with the spirit of His teaching is therefore a reflection not upon Him, but upon themselves. An ideal is never to be judged by the deeds or misdeeds of those who merely use it as a cloak; one could no more condemn the Ten Commandments because the great mass of Jews have failed to live up to them, than to condemn the teachings of Jesus because of their ruthless violations.[3]

[1]The Gospel of Matthew, chap. vii. 21. [2]James, chap. ii. 26.

[3]Let it be clearly understood, it is not our purpose to minimize the anti-Jewish agitation of a Henry Ford, the stupidity and the in-

The teaching upon which Jesus placed the most insistent emphais for His followers was that they should love and not hate, that they should not fight wrong with wrong, but defeat it with goodness. In the great commandment given to His disciples He said: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."[1]

Discipleship, it follows, is not concomitant with the mere bearing of His name, the name Christian, it rests upon the doing of His will; and the highest expression of His will is that we "love one another." This principle must motivate our every action in the relation between man and man, between race and race, between white and black, between Jew and Gentile. It is this, this His supreme ideal, which Jesus holds up for us, and for which He gave His life.

Doubtless due to the background of our experience, we

humanity of the Nordics, the anti-Semitic waves in Poland, Roumania, and Hungary. What we are contending is that an ideal or teaching must be able to stand or fall on its own merit, unaffected by the action of individuals or groups. Would it be fair to condemn the Jewish race because the rabble of Amsterdam, fired by the Synagogue authorities, hounded the lofty-minded Baruch Spinoza, even in cold blood aiming at his life, finally excommunicating him from the Congregation of Israel with the most violent curses of the Jewish ritual? Or would it be fair to charge the whole Jewish race with the inhuman treatment of that other noble soul, Uriel Acosta, who was driven to suicide by the Synagogue? We repeat, an ideal or teaching must be judged on its own merit.

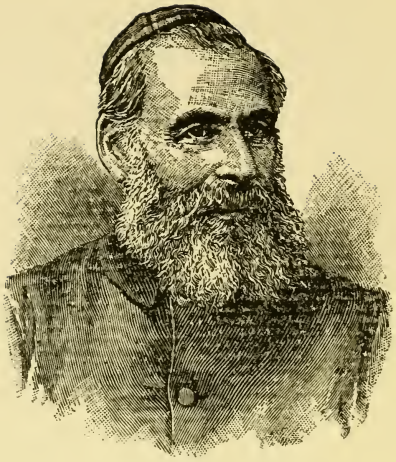
[1]The Gospel of John, chap. xiii. 34, 35.

Jews may question the possibility of ever realizing such an ideal, of getting men to drop their petty differences, their national and geographic divisions, and actually to "love one another." But the experience of twenty centuries proves that all other attempts to unify the race have failed; selfishness is still dominant in the hearts of men, racial pride and prejudice, now here, now there, are continually flaring up. The welter of blood and misery of the World War should have been sufficient to demonstrate the futility of an indulgence in hate and selfishness. Twenty centuries more may come and go and mankind's dream of universal brotherhood be no nearer realization than it is today.

Are we then never to find a way out of the maze?

Across the wreckage of human failure, the blatant materialism of our civilization, and above the babel of its confusing noises, the speculative Utopias and panaceas of philosopher, diplomat and politician, the call of the Christ comes to men:

"I say unto you—love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; overcome evil with good; love one another that ye may be children of your Father in Heaven."



ISAAC LICHTENSTEIN

For 34 years District Rabbi of Tapio-Szelo, Hungary, wrote:

I had thought the New Testament to be impure, a source of pride, of over-weening selfishness, of hatred, and of the worst kind of violence, but as I opened it, I felt myself peculiarly and wonderfully taken possession of. A sudden glory, a light, flashed through my soul. I looked for thorns, and gathered roses; I discovered pearls instead of pebbles; instead of hatred, love; instead of vengeance, forgiveness; instead of bondage, freedom; instead of pride, humility; intead of enmity, conciliation; instead of death, life, salvation, resurrection, heavenly treasure.

From *Two Letters: or What I Really Wish*, p. 3.

BY H. EINSPRUCH

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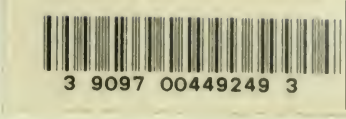
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